



Let's Go
Green
Shopping

You can conserve resources, save energy, and prevent waste by buying products that:

- Are energy efficient
- Are used or reusable
- Are made with recycled content or are recyclable
- Have no packaging or reduced packaging



Everything you buy affects the environment, but some choices are better than others.

“Green purchasing”

means buying smart. Shop with the environment in mind—that is, buy products that help conserve natural resources, save energy, and prevent waste. Green purchasing can also mean *not buying* things you *don't need*. By educating yourself about the products you buy, you can make a difference in protecting the environment.

Green purchasing involves learning about all the ways that a product can affect the environment during the course of its “life cycle”—from the materials used to manufacture it, to how you use it, to what you do with it when you're finished with it—so that you can make smart choices.

Use the tips and resources in this brochure to make yourself an educated consumer.

shopping



Did you know that since your parents were born, the amount of trash each American generates has doubled?*

Buy smart. Take some time to think before you buy something—maybe you don't really need it. Maybe you can think of an alternative to buying a product, such as renting a

DVD instead of buying it or sending a free e-card instead of a paper birthday card. Shopping with the environment in mind will conserve resources, prevent waste, and save money.

Buy durable products. Instead of buying disposable products, which are wasteful, buy things that will last a long time, such as rechargeable batteries and reusable plastic mugs for drinks.

Avoid excess packaging. Look for products that have less packaging, or buy in bulk—you'll have less to throw away. You can also buy items with packaging that can be reused or recycled.

Buy used. Buying things that have been used before means that your purchase doesn't use more resources or energy. If the item is still reusable when you're through with it, then the next person to use it is not using additional resources either. You can find authentic retro clothes, room accessories, and even sports equipment at your local thrift store. Shop online or at local stores to buy used CDs and books.

tips

Share with friends. Another way to save resources and energy is to swap with friends and family instead of buying brand-new products. Maybe you and your friends like the same video games. Why not share your games instead of each of you owning the same game? Or maybe you can rent the game first to see if you really want to own it.

Buy energy-efficient items. Look for the ENERGY STAR® logo when buying electronics such as TVs, CD players, DVD players, and computers. ENERGY STAR is a program designed to identify and promote energy-efficient products.

Buy recycled.

Buying items made with recycled-content materials means that fewer natural resources, such as trees, were used to produce the products. Products made from recycled paper, plastic, and other materials are usually easy to recognize in the store—just read the labels. Try starting with school supplies. Many stores carry recycled notebooks, pens, and other products.



Did you know that for every 42 notebooks made with 100 percent recycled paper, one tree is saved?*



how do my purchases
make a difference?



Buying “green” lets companies know that you care about the environmental impact of the products you buy. Why would a big corporation care what you think? Because your current and future purchasing power is extremely important to them. In fact, companies spend \$12 billion a year

marketing their products to you.* Shopping “green” sends a message to the companies—that you care about the environment, and you’re not afraid to use your buying power to prove it.



Did you know that 67 percent of parents buying a new car base their decision on advice from their kids, who are not even old enough to drive?*

Your purchasing choices affect what your parents

buy. Your parents buy groceries and other packaged items based on your likes and dislikes, and they might even buy a car based on input from you and your siblings. Your friends also listen to what you have to say when they decide what to buy. Use your influence to help others shop smart and protect the environment.



Did you know that young people spend or influence the spending of \$300 billion a year, or about 1 in 3 dollars spent?*

for more

Use the following resources to find more information about how you can make a difference!



According to Teen People, 62 percent of its readers try to use environmentally friendly products.*

1. **Act Green**—a collaboration of the Union of Concerned Scientists and the Environmental Media Association—promotes environmental awareness and positive solutions to young people across the country.

www.actgreen.com

2. **www.IBuyDifferent.org** is part of the *Be, Live, Buy Different—Make a Difference* campaign, which is a new national program from the World Wildlife Fund and the Center for a New American Dream. It teaches young people how to make a difference by buying differently.

3. **“The Cost of Cool”**—co-produced by the National Wildlife Federation, Population Communications International, and The Video Project—is a 26-minute video and curriculum guide package expressly designed for teens. It includes background information and hands-on activities about consumption, media, and the environment. www.videoproject.net/cost_of_cool_exp.html

4. **Ecological Footprint** helps teens and others calculate the impact their choices have on the environment. www.rprogress.org/programs/sustainabilityindicators/ef

information

5. **EPA's Green Advertising Claims brochure** contains information about specific terms used to describe products, including "environmentally friendly," "biodegradable," and "ozone friendly."

<www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/recycle/greenads.pdf>

6. **EPA's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing program Web site**—while mainly designed for government workers—contains great green purchasing resources and links.

<www.epa.gov/epp>

7. **ENERGY STAR®** is a program designed to identify and promote energy-efficient products.

<www.energystar.gov>



Buy Green Here

- **The Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County's Eco-Friendly Marketplace** lists companies that sell green products, including book bags made from reclaimed rubber inner tubes, hats and mittens made from recycled sweaters, belts and jewelry made from bottle caps, and purses made from old license plates and hubcaps. <www.swancc.org>
- **Co-op America's Green Pages Online™** is a directory of green companies that are committed to social and environmental responsibility. <www.greenpages.org>



Take the Resource Conservation Challenge!

EPA's Resource Conservation Challenge (RCC) calls on all Americans to prevent pollution, promote recycling and reuse, and conserve energy and materials.

Achieving these goals means adopting a resource conservation ethic, purchasing more wisely, and using products that are easy to recycle and are made of recycled materials.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/rcc.

*This information is cited on <www.ibuydifferent.org>. Special thanks to this joint program of the Center for a New American Dream and the World Wildlife Fund for contributing valuable information to this booklet.



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